

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, March 26, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Menus for Men." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--oCo--

Now about this matter of the way to a man's heart. We women have often been told that food is what takes us there. But that's rather indefinite advice to go to work on. Another humorous maxim says, "Feed the brute." Also indefinite. Feed him what? We need to know what kind of food appeals especially to masculine taste, what certain dishes he likes best, and what kind of menu pleases him. For example, suppose that you have some men guests coming to dinner tonight and want to serve them their idea of a perfect meal. What will you plan for the bill of fare?

Well, I listened the other day to a group of men discussing their ideas versus their wives' ideas of satisfying food. And I'll pass on their remarks to you for what they are worth. Now and then a man's viewpoint on matters of food is very enlightening.

The tall, dark man sitting in the corner began the discussion by saying, "Women are funny, aren't they? They all seem to like real he-men. In general their movie favorites are all of the knock-down and drag-out type. Yet when it comes to meals, they will go on serving their husbands or their men guests feminine food -- you know, dainty, fluffy-ruffles dishes, dabs of nothing all dressed up."

Another man in the group agreed, "Yes, sir, that's just the way it goes. I've often told my wife that she can't appease a man's appetite with a fruit salad or a bit of marshmallow whip. I've often said to her, 'For goodness' sake, let's have some muscle and brawn food for once!'"

Still another man added, "Why don't they save their dainties for women's luncheons and teas and give us some real food when we come home?"

In general they all agreed that the food they liked best was simple, substantial fare; that they preferred corned beef any time to delicacies like sweetbreads and squab; that they liked broiled or roasted meats best, and vegetables simply cooked and simply served without sauces; they preferred simple salads with just plain French dressing, and desserts like those two old-timers -- pie and ice cream.

3/26/34

From that conversation I decided that no matter how cultured or refined a man may become, nor how far he has left his football days behind, still his ideas about food don't change much. He still prefers plain fare to dressed up food. And he's still a carnivorous animal and likes steak and roast beef usually better than the daintier meats. And in spite of present day diet fads that rule it out, most men feel that no dinner is complete without the good old potato in some form or other. Men also like highly seasoned foods. They're fond of onions. They're fond of strong cheese. They like catsup and chile sauce and so on. You may be so refined that you shudder at the thought of strong-smelling cheese, but for the sake of household happiness, better have it on the table once in a while, so your husband won't have to leave home to satisfy his appetite.

As for this matter of meal plans, I gathered from the remarks on all sides that the masculine ideal of a menu starts with soup, continues with meat or fish and potatoes and ends with a plain salad, crackers and cheese, and coffee. A man with a sweet tooth may want ice cream or pie or stewed fruit for dessert. Other men may want one good cooked vegetable besides potatoes with the main course.

Well, of course, I'm repeating to you the conversation of just one group of men. Tastes may differ. But I think this group voiced the opinion of the sex in general. Have you ever noticed what specialties are featured in men's clubs? They're usually dishes like roast beef and Yorkshire pudding or beef and kidney pie or some other plain substantial food. This is the kind of food universally served in England where everything is planned to please the men.

The soups men like are generally the heavier soups, bean or lentil soup, onion soup with cheese, chowders and oyster stew. Men like Boston baked beans with brown bread. They like calf's liver and bacon. Among the Lenten main dishes they like Welsh rabbit and broiled fish steak. They like big baked potatoes and French fried potatoes. For dessert, you'll find them pleased with deep-dish apple pie, cherry pie, strawberry shortcake and plain ice creams.

So much for my report on a masculine conversation. Now let's plan a dinner to suit men guests. Let's start the meal with a tomato juice cocktail, seasoned with onion juice, a bit of horseradish and so on. Then let's have a planked steak or just a thick broiled steak. Baked potatoes and French fried onions next. And green beans with butter. For dessert, deep-dish apple pie. You can make it "a la mode" if you like it. Finally, coffee.

Once more. Tomato juice cocktail; Broiled steak; Baked potatoes; French fried onions; Green beans buttered; Deep-dish apple pie; Coffee.

###

